

# EIGHTH-GRADE SPEECHES

## *Opportunity for Self-Reflection*

The pinnacle of the Peck eighth-grade experience is undoubtedly the long-awaited Eighth-Grade Speech. Solid public speaking skills and experience are one of the many reasons why parents choose a Peck education for their child. These lessons begin right from the start in kindergarten and progress throughout the grades. Peck's oldest students build upon years of public speaking experience and formal training in sixth grade to craft a compelling final narrative to share with their classmates prior to graduation. Students often reflect on meaningful experiences from their time at Peck, beloved family pets, long-lost relatives, and the bonds of family and friendship that center and ground them as people.

*Enjoy these highlights from some of this year's eighth-grade speeches:*



## CHRISTOPHER FU

Combining humor and humility, Christopher Fu explored his once-felt hatred for Shakespeare and, subsequently, poetry, saying he felt restricted by the rules of this literary form. That is, until he discovered free form. Christopher detailed the process of his poetry submission to the National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, for which he received an honorable mention.

*"Try to understand what you have an opinion on. Maybe through that your opinion might still be the same, but at least you will know, like I knew, that you had tried it out, you had given it a chance."*



Christina Silva artfully brought the audience into the world of her neighbor Stan. By describing the sights and sounds of her elderly neighbor's home and backyard, listeners were able to see and feel the impact this man had on Christina's life.

# CHRISTINA SILVA

*“Stan taught me that love comes in countless forms and magic is all around us if we're only willing to stop and listen. He taught me that when you love something—a place, a person, anything—you create a new world for them full of magic and music and paintings and books and lectures about safety. He taught me that you don't say I love you with three little words. You say it in the things you create for that person. And if you really love someone, when the time comes, you smile through your tears and you let them go.”*



# LUKE PAGANO

Luke Pagano brought his audience along on his journey through learning guitar. Despite his lessons getting off to a bumpy start, Luke detailed the determination and perseverance he showed in his pursuit of guitar prowess. Learning the guitar was not always fun or easy, but Luke persisted and has now even performed live with his band!

*“I'm telling you this because it connects to something key when learning anything new: Perseverance. Peck teaches us a lot about perseverance. If you get a bad grade on a test you don't just give up and do the same for all the other tests. You power through the bad grades and learn from your mistakes.”*



# BRODY KALAFER



Brody Kalafer delivered a funny and self-reflective speech to mark Peck's final Kairos Assembly of the school year. Brody, a self-described "disaster," comedically detailed a two-week nature trip he and a former classmate took on one summer. Everything that could have gone wrong on the trip went wrong, but Brody realized that the reason the trip was so meaningful and fun was actually because of the hardships he and his friends experienced.

*"I had an epiphany that made everything clear. All of the disasters and hardships that we faced those two weeks were just good times in disguise. A disaster is just a bonding experience waiting to happen."*

# ADDY SANTOMASSIMO

Addy Santomassimo, a lifelong soccer player, discussed the experiences over the years that developed her perseverance. She explained that perseverance isn't just pushing through a tough loss or a difficult practice. Addy, who says she is incredibly injury-prone, chronicled how despite injury after injury, she kept getting on the field to play because she loves soccer, never wants to disappoint her teammates, and always strives to be her best.



*"Sometimes your passions take a lot out of you, physically and emotionally. But that doesn't mean that you give up. If anything, I've learned such taxing experiences can only make you work harder."*